

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OPR-02 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05 /077 W
-----101139Z 112646 /16

P 101024Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1514
INFO AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY
AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY
CINCPAC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 4751

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PK, PINT
SUBJECT: REPORT OF UNREST IN TRIBAL AREAS

1. LOUIS DUPREE, AMCIT WHO IS LONG-TIME DENIZEN OF AFGHANISTAN, AND RESEARCHER ON THE TRIBAL AREAS WHO HAS NUMEROUS CONTACTS IN THE FRONTIER, CAME TO EMBASSY YESTERDAY FOR CONVERSATION WITH CHARGE. DUPREE SAID THAT DURING RECENT VISIT TO PESHAWAR HE SPOKE WITH NUMBER OF CONTACTS AMONG THE TRIBALS AND THE MILITARY AND WAS TOLD THAT VARIOUS TRIBES HAD RECENTLY TAKEN ACTIONS TO SUPPORT THE PAKISTAN NATIONAL ALLIANCE AND DEMAND THE PM'S OUSTER.

2. ACCORDING TO DUPREE, THE WAZIRIS (AN IMPORTANT TRIBE IN SOUTHERN PORTION OF TRIBAL AREA ALONG PAK/AFGHAN BORDER) MET IN JIRGA (TRIBAL MEETING) TWO WEEKS AGO. WAZIRIS DECIDED TO SUPPORT THE PNA IN ITS STRUGGLE WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND TO DEMAND REMOVAL OF THE PM. ABOUT THE
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SAME TIME, TRIBALS IN BAJAUR AGENCY (MOST NORTHERN AGENCY IN TRIBAL AREA BORDERING AFGHANISTAN) MET IN JIRGA AND MADE SAME DECISION. THREE DAYS AGO, THE AFRIDIS, ONE OF THE MAJOR TRIBES WITH LANDS BORDERING THE KHYBER, ALSO MET IN JIRGA AND DECIDED TO SUPPORT THE OPPOSITION AND CALL FOR PM'S REMOVAL.

3. DUPREE SAID HE HAD BEEN TOLD IN PESHAWAR THAT AN INTER-TRIBAL JIRGA WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM EVERY TRIBE WOULD BE HELD WITHIN TWO WEEKS. SUCH A MEETING WOULD BE UNPRECEDENTED AND THE ONLY TOPIC TO BE DISCUSSED WOULD BE TRIBAL RESPONSE TO THE BHUTTO/OPPOSITION CONFRONTATION. DUPREE ADDED THAT TRIBESMEN SAY THEY HAVE TWO BASIC DEMANDS - ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ISLAMIC SYSTEM IN PAKISTAN AND INSURING THE INTEGRITY OF THE PATHAN WAY OF LIFE. TRIBES HAVE DECIDED THAT BHUTTO CAN GUARANTEE NEITHER, IN SPITE OF HIS PROMISES, SO THEY HAVE DECIDED NOT TO SUPPORT HIM. DUPREE ALSO NOTED THAT BEGUM WALI KHAN, WIFE OF IMPRISONED LEADER OF THE BANNED NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY, HAS BECOME A HEROINE IN THE FRONTIER FOR HER ANTI-BHUTTO ACTIVITIES AND WAS ASKED TO ATTEND THE PLANNED ALL TRIBAL JIRGA.

4. WHEN ASKED WHAT THE TRIBALS WOULD DO IN CONCRETE TERMS, DUPREE SAID THEY HAVE TOLD THEIR POLITICAL AGENTS (GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES IN THE TRIBAL AREAS) THAT ALTHOUGH THEY WILL NOT FORMALLY JOIN THE PNA THEY SUPPORT ALL ITS AIMS, AND THE TRIBAL ELDERS WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR WHATEVER ACTIONS THE TRIBESMEN TAKE AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT. DUPREE ADDED THAT HE FELT IT WAS POSSIBLE THE TRIBALS WOULD TAKE DRASTIC ACTIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, IF THEY WANTED THE TRIBES COULD CLOSE THE KHYBER PASS AND MIGHT EVEN ATTACK THE SETTLED AREAS. DUPREE EMPHASIZED THAT TRIBAL ANIMOSITY TOWARD BHUTTO WAS SO GREAT THAT ANYTHING WAS POSSIBLE.

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5. DUPREE SAID THAT HE BELIEVE AFGHANISTAN WAS NOT INVOLVED IN ANY WAY WITH THE TRIBAL MEETINGS AND WAS NOT ATTEMPTING TO INFLUENCE THE COURSE OF EVENTS IN PAKISTAN TRIBAL TERRITORY. HE SAID IT WAS HIS VIEW THAT DAOUD HAS CONSIDERABLE PATIENCE AND WOULD PREFER TO LET THE GOP SEE WHAT IT COULD WORK OUT WITH THE TRIBALS. HOWEVER, IF THE PAK ARMY MOVED INTO THE TRIBAL AREAS, THE GOA WOULD HAVE TO RECONSIDER ITS POSITION.

6. DUPREE TENDS TO BE ALARMIST IN HIS PREDICTIONS AND HIS PERSONAL ANIMOSITY TOWARD THE BHUTTO GOVERNMENT COLORS HIS STATEMENTS. WE THINK HIS VIEWS ON THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE TRIBES CLOSING THE KHYBER OR ATTACKING THE SETTLED AREAS ARE OVERDRAWN, ALTHOUGH BOTH ARE POSSIBLE. WE BELIEVE THE TRIBES WOULD BE DETERRED KNOWING THE HARSH PUNITIVE RESPONSE SUCH ACTIONS WOULD EVOKE FROM THE ARMY. HOWEVER, IF THE FACTS AS HE STATES THEM - THREE JIRGAS SO FAR AND ONE ALL TRIBAL MEETING PLANNED - ARE TRUE, IT MUST CAUSE GREAT CONCERN

TO THE GOVERNMENT. REGARDLES OF WHETHER OR NOT THE TRIBESMEN
TAKE ANY CONCERTED ACTION AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT, BHUTTO
MUST NOW PAY MUCH GREATER ATTENTION TO THE TRIBAL AREAS
BOTH IN TERMS OF SECURITY AND POLITICS. THIS COMES AT
A TIME WHEN HE CAN LEAST AFFORD TO BE DIVERTED FROM HIS
OTHER POLITICAL CONCERNS.

7. ALSO, IF DUPREE'S REPORTS ARE TRUE, TRIBAL DISCONTENT
WILL BE YET ANOTHER DISCONCERTING DEVELOPMENT FOR THE
ARMY WHICH FINDS ITSELF DRAWN INCREASINGLY DEEPER INTO
THE POLITICAL MORASS. UNDOUBTEDLY TROUBLED OVER ITS
POLICE DUTIES IN THE PUNJAB AND SIND, THE THOUGHT OF
HAVING TO PREPARE FOR POSSIBLE MILITARY ACTIONS
IN THE TRIBAL REGIONS BECAUSE OF TRIBAL ANTIPATHY
TO BHUTTO CAN ONLY MAKE THE ARMY QUESTION EVEN MORE
ITS ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE PM.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PROVINCE, GOVERNMENT REFORM, PRIME MINISTER, TRIBALISM, REMOVAL FROM OFFICE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 10-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977ISLAMA04751
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770164-0680
Format: TEL
From: ISLAMABAD
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770575/aaaacmx.e
Line Count: 139
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 2753c397-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2586567
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REPORT OF UNREST IN TRIBAL AREAS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, PK, (DUPREE, LOUIS)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/2753c397-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009